

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-05 OMB-01 /084 W

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R 041005Z JUN 75

FM AMCONSUL PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 559

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

LNO SAIPAN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 0498

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PP

SUBJ: PROBLEMS BETWEEN FRANCE AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA

1. SIAGURU, SECRETARY, DFRT, TOLD ME MAY 14 GPNG WILL NOT PERMIT FRANCE TO OPEN A DIPLOMATIC MISSION HERE. FRENCH CHARGE IN CANBERRA CAME TO PNG IN OCTOBER 1974 TO LOOK OVER SITUATION (A-28, NOVEMBER 1974), AND RETURNED LAST MONTH TO MAKE AN APPROACH ABOUT OPENING A MISSION.

2. SIAGURU SAID HE HAD ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY ASSURED THE FRENCH CHARGE THAT FRANCE COULD OPEN A MISSION HERE AND WE HEARD FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT FRENCH WERE LOOKING AT PROPERTY. THEN, HOWEVER, WHEN SIAGURU PRESENTED THE MATTER TO GPNG POLITICAL LEVEL (PROBABLY TO WHOLE CABINET) HE ENCOUNTERED STRONG OPPOSITION, AND HIS POSITION WAS REVERSED. REASONS ARE: FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTS IN PACIFIC
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AND, MORE IMPORTANT, FRENCH TREATMENT OF ITS PACIFIC COLONIES.

3. DECISION HAS NOW BEEN MADE, SIAGURU SAID: THERE WILL BE NO REPEAT NO FRENCH DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION IN PORT MORESBY IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE. AFTER POLITICIANS MADE DECISION, THEY GAVE SIAGURU TASK OF INFORMING FRENCH.

4. SIAGURU IS NOW CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE FRENCH RETALIATION. HE SAID THAT LAST DAY OF CURRENT TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE JUNE 5, AND IF PNG HAS NOT BY THAT TIME FORMALLY DECIDED DATE OF INDEPENDENCE, FRANCE WILL HAVE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO PROPOSE THAT UN OBSERVATION TEAM VISIT PNG. (HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY WILL FIX DATE OF INDEPENDENCE WHEN IT MEETS ON JUNE 5, ACCORDING TO PRESENT SCHEDULE, BUT THIS COULD EASILY SLIP TO JUNE 6 OR EVEN LATER.) FRENCH COULD ARGUE IN LATE MAY OR EARLY JUNE THAT IN SPITE OF ALL THAT HAD BEEN SAID, NO FIRM DECISION HAD BEEN REACHED ON PNG INDEPENDENCE, AND UN SHOULD FIND OUT WHY.

5. SHOULD UN OBSERVATION TEAM COME TO PNG IN JULY OR AUGUST, IT WOULD BRING ABOUT ANOTHER WAVE OF ACTIVITY ON PART OF PAPUA BESENA AND OTHER SEPARATIST GROUPS, SIAGURU FEARS. THIS WOULD BE EMBARRASSING TO GPNG ON EVE OF INDEPENDENCE.

6. SIAGURU SAID THAT GPNG WOULD BE VERY HAPPY TO HAVE UN MISSION ATTEND INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS, BUT IT DOES NOT WANT ONE TO COME BEFORE THEN.

7. GPNG WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE IT, SIAGURU SAID, IF THE USG WOULD USE ITS INFLUENCE TO PREVENT DISPATCH OF UN OBSERVATION TEAM TO PNG PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE.

8. COMMENT: REFUSAL TO PERMIT FRANCE TO OPEN A POST WAS MORE FORTHRIGHT DECISION THAN I WOULD HAVE EXPECTED, AND IS INDICATIVE OF PNG SENSITIVITIES ON COLONIAL ISSUE. I AGREE WITH SIAGURU THAT UN OBSERVATION TEAM HERE IN JULY OR AUGUST WOULD GIVE IMPETUS TO ANOTHER ROUND OF SEPARATIST AGITATION. THE ABOVE WAS DRAFTED PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF STATE 118321.
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